

**TOWN OF WEARE  
PLANNING BOARD**

15 Flanders Memorial Rd - PO Box 190  
Weare NH 03281  
Phone: 603-529-2250 - Fax: 603-529-7527

October 14, 2010  
Meeting Minutes  
\*\*FINAL COPY\*\*

**PRESENT:** Craig Francisco, Chairman; Frank Bolton, Vice Chairman; Neal Kurk, Secretary; Thomas Clow, Chip Meany, Land Use Coordinator, Sheila Savaria, Recording Secretary

**GUESTS:** Kathy Remillard, Phil Mansour, Lisa M. Wilber, Deborah Brown, Janet Brown, B. Brown, Brian Ivinjack, Tina & Robert Connor

**I: CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Craig Francisco called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm at the Weare Town Office Building.

**II: ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS:**

Bond Reduction - Frank Ferrante, Pine Hill Road The road has been complete and accepted for 2 years, and Mr. Ferrante is now requesting the bond money from the town. Carl Knapp and Jim Donison both recommend releasing the remaining balance of the bond, which is \$70,000 plus interest.

Neal Kurk moved that having completed all requirements for the return of the bond, that the board authorizes the release of the money in the usual course; Tom Clow seconded, all voted in favor.

Brookshire, Phase 2: Craig Francisco stepped down as Chairman for this discussion due to a conflict with the case. Frank Bolton accepted the position as acting Chairman. There is a request in reduction in the bond for phase 2 of the Brookshire Estates. The town engineer has reviewed the second phase and noted that the bond to be retained, including contingencies, is \$74,183. The amount requested to be released is \$47,313. The remainder of the bond would stay in the account until the road is complete and accepted.

Tom Clow moved that the Planning Board release \$47,313 of the Brookshire bond; Neal Kurk seconded, all voted in favor. Chairman Francisco resumed his position as Chairman of the board.

**III: OTHER BUSINESS:**

Discussion of Proposed Changes to the Sign Ordinance: Neal Kurk explained that as a result of several site plan reviews this year that have been held for various properties that were changing or adding businesses, there have been difficulties with the current sign ordinance as it applies to the new businesses, especially in 'shopping plazas'. The current ordinance does not take into account the concept of a shopping plaza, so the Planning Board wants to update the ordinance to reflect that. There was discussion about the current definition not taking into account signs other than business signs, and perhaps the definition should be made more general with subsections for different types of signs.

The board would like to hear from the public so the new ordinance reflects their input. Tom Clow also proposed changes to the current ordinance, which were compared with Mr. Kurk's in this discussion.

Neal Kurk proposed to make the sign definition more general, with subsections of different types of signs. Also, Mr. Kurk proposes a \$1 permit fee to help with the enforcement of people who are not following the ordinance. In the R and RA districts, Mr. Kurk proposes reducing the sign sizes from 32 sq. feet to 12 sq. feet and increasing the Village district sign size so all districts, excluding

commercial, would be the same. In the Commercial district, signs would be allowed to be 32 sq. feet, double-sided, plus an additional sign for each business. Mr. Kurk also feels a small sign on a farmers porch would be acceptable.

Tom Clow discussed restrictions he would like to see loosened. He'd like to address:

1. The needs of having more than one business on a lot.
2. Size of the signs in the Village District is too small at 2' x 3'.
3. Farmers porch roof signs.

In regards to sign illuminations, Mr. Clow noted that the existing ordinance requires lights to be turned off when business is not operating, and that signs should be lit from above and not below. Mr. Clow's changes consider allowing signs to be lit from either above or below. Also, holiday displays being limited to 30 days before and 10 days after the holiday, which would apply to all holidays. If a new business on an existing site changes completely, the owner should have to comply with the new sign ordinance, but if an old sign falls down or is damaged, the owners should be able to replace it. In regards to residential development, the board discussed new developments being able to identify the complex name, and Mr. Clow feels that Weare is a small town and shouldn't be broken down into smaller communities.

Chip Meany: Mr. Meany feels there are currently too many illegal signs and the Planning Board should create an ordinance that he can enforce. In addition, all new business signage should be approved with the approval of the site plan.

Public Comment on Sign Ordinance:

Lisa Wilbur – Says the board is assuming that the people of Weare care about signs, and are offended by them. Ms. Wilbur says that we live in the sticks, and she doesn't care if illegal signs are up. It is also not the Town's business if she wants to have decorations or lights up all year round. Ms. Wilbur feels it is also not the Town's business what message she wants to put on her signs because we live in a free country. The rural character of a Town is not defined by a small sign, and it is subjective to what is an attractive sign.

Debbie Brown – Ms. Brown plans to have holiday lights up and left on for security and illumination for her business, and feels the new ordinance should allow this. In terms of signs, Ms. Brown feels that if a sign is damaged or ruined, it should be replaced to be the same, and not have to conform to the new ordinance. She also discusses the possibility of having a message board allowed for multiple signs instead of multiple sandwich boards, which are difficult to read and can look tacky. In the Industrial District, Ms. Brown thinks the new ordinance is proposing signs that are too small and suggests directional signs on buildings, such as labeling them building A, B, C, or something similar. Ms. Brown thanked the board for listening to her as a member of the business community.

Richard Townes - Mr. Townes is concerned with the signs being too small and people not being able to see them as they drive through town, especially considering the posted speed limit, snow banks in the winter, and the location of the business. Mr. Townes would like to find a balance between appropriate sized signs without making the village district look gaudy. Mr. Townes also believes old signs that fall down or are ruined, should be able to be replaced, and not have to conform to the new sign ordinance.

Michael Couhie: Mr. Couhie thanked the board for their efforts to deal with the growth in town, and is pleased that they are trying to update the sign ordinance. Mr. Couhie recommends expanding the village district to recognize that there may be more than 2 businesses on one location because the town is growing.

Janet Brown: Feels the town is going overboard on their sign regulations, and thinks the board is not welcoming or accommodating to small businesses. Ms. Brown also adds that the Granite State Telephone sign should be reconsidered.

Philip Mansour: Dr. Mansour understands the balance needed between maintaining the look of the town and the advertising needs of businesses, but says the signs shouldn't be too small. Dr. Mansour has one business in a plaza and asked the board what would be allowed for signage if he sublet his business? Mr. Clow replied that the Planning Board would negotiate the signage in a case like that. Dr. Mansour also feels that the permitted height of a sign is a problem considering the height of the snow banks.

**IV: OTHER BUISINESS:**

Minutes – Frank Bolton moved to accept the minutes from September 23 as amended; Tom Clow seconded, all voted in favor.

Upcoming Meetings - October 28 - Regular meeting

Nov. 4 & 11 - work sessions

Nov. 18 - Regular meeting

Dec. 2 - 1st public hearing for zoning changes

Dec. 16, Jan 6, Jan 13 - public hearings

**V: ADJOURNMENT:** Tom Clow moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 pm; Neal Kurk seconded, all voted in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheila Savaria  
Recording Secretary